

Carter-Gilmer House
E. Jefferson St. at N. 8th. St.
Charlottesville
Virginia

HABS No. VA-1079

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Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

CARTER-GILMER HOUSE

HABS No. VA-1079

Location: East Jefferson Street at North Eighth Street,
Charlottesville, Virginia

Present Owner: Counterpoint Resources Corporation.

Present Use: Rental apartments.

Significance: The original Carter-Gilmer House was constructed in 1820. After the Civil War it underwent extensive changes. The present structure is a good example of the Federal townhouse type. It retains much of the quality craftsmanship of the original structure.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The Carter-Gilmer House was built in 1820 by Dr. Charles Carter. Since then five generations of the maternal lineage have occupied the house. After the Civil War, several additions were added onto the house. The lineage chain was broken in 1955 when Henderson Heyward, an architect, purchased the property, the house subsequently underwent further alterations. The house is now owned by Counterpoint Resources Corporation which purchased the property in 1978 from Hedgerow Corporation, a Heyward Corporation.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

- A. General Statement: The present Carter-Gilmer House is a brick, three story, three-bay structure with a low hipped roof. The house was originally a two story gable structure. The original plan was a rectangle, twenty-eight feet wide and thirty-six feet long. In the late nineteenth century, a third story was added, and the character of the house was significantly altered. A one story brick addition was later added to the south-west corner and a small one story addition on piers was attached to the south-east corner. In 1955 the interior was partitioned off, altering the original side-hall plan. At this time, it is presumed the first floor ceiling was lowered to accommodate wiring and plumbing. The structure now accommodates three separate apartments, however it retains many of its original appointments.
- B. Description of Exterior:
1. Over-all dimensions: In addition to the original 28 x 36 foot rectangular plan there is the large addition that measures 15 x 18 feet. There are also several smaller appendages on the south side: a screened porch 6'8" x 29'5", a small one story frame on

piers, 7'8" x 7'3". All three of these additions were built before 1896 (Sanborne Insurance Maps). In addition there is a more recent one story frame, 9'7" x 10'5". The ridge of the roof is approximately 41'6" from the poured concrete floor of the basement.

2. Foundations: The building consists of brickwalls from the footings up. There is a brick retaining wall around the perimeter of the basement.
3. Exterior walls: The entire original structure is finished in brick. The west and north elevations are Flemish bonded, and the eastern and rear elevations are finished in six course American bond. This is due to the fact that at the time of construction the west gable faced town and the east gable faced the county. A change in brick bonding above the second story windows indicates the later addition. Traces of the front porch are still evident on the front elevation.
3. Structural system: The structural system relies on a center partition running east-west and on the side-wall partition that runs parallel to the east gable and perpendicular to the center partition. Metal tie-rods were at one time added, and run the width of the building between the first and second floors and between the second and third. It is interesting to note that when the third floor was added the gable walls were continued at half the original width while the side walls remained constant. The floor boards run perpendicular to the street, on the first floor and second floors, suggesting that the joists run parallel to the street. The exterior walls are solid brick and approximately one foot thick.
4. Porches: There exists a one story frame screened porch on piers on the south elevation. It extends the width of the structure at the level of the first floor. It is in very poor condition. There existed a one story porch on the front elevation but this was removed in 1955. There is now a railed concrete stoop on both the east and front elevations, serving the respective entrances.
5. Chimneys: There are two identical chimneys on the west elevation. These were originally part of a curtained gable, but now they both resemble inside end chimneys. They both have a double course, corbeled cap.
6. Windows and blinds: The windows are of several basic types. The first and second floor windows are six-over-nine lights; the third floor windows are reversed; the basement windows are three-over-six lights with the exception of one that is

reversed. The upper two kitchens have three-over-three lights windows. All the windows, with the exception of two, are double hung sash. On the east elevation, there is one large casement window and a smaller window above it with a hinged sash. All windows are wood and have attenuated muntins approximately one inch wide. All windows, other than basement windows, have wood blinds with decorative metal catches.

8. Roof: The low hip roof was recently redone with standing seam tin. The pitch is approximately 3:12. There is an overhanging eave with a boxed cornice.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: There are three floors and a full basement. There is no accessible space beneath the roof. A large portion of the basement is now an apartment. The basement has a fireplace in the North chimney, however, there is none in the other. The first and second floors each have two fireplaces. The third floor has none. Each floor plan is dictated by the center partition and the original side-hall plan.
2. Stairway: The only stairway is in the original sidehall and ascends to the third floor in an open well. It is a two-flight stair with an intermediate landing.
3. Flooring: The flooring is yellow heart pine of random widths and is believed to be original. The basement is tiled with linoleum as are the upper bathrooms and kitchens. The large front room on the third floor is also tiled.
4. Walls and ceilings: The walls and ceilings are all plastered. There is baseboard on each floor except the basement. There is a chairrail on the second floor. The first floor has a small, poor ceiling moulding.
5. Doors: The doors are all wood, and most are from the original structure. These are of the cross and bible type with six panels. There are several four panel doors. The front entrance has a double leaf, three panel door.
6. Fireplaces: There are five fireplaces, none of which are now in use. Each has an attractive mantel with architrave, frieze, and cornice. Each mantel is different and well executed. Two of the fireplaces have been blocked off with detailed cast iron grates.
7. Interior trim: The interior trim throughout the house is a standard architrave trim. There is a small ceiling moulding in portions of the first floor. This was probably added when the ceiling was lowered.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records are part of a project undertaken by the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia under the direction of K. Edward Lay, Professor of Architecture. The records were prepared by Pierre Crosby, in the Spring semester, 1982. The documentation was donated to the Historic American Buildings Survey. It was not produced under HABS supervision, nor edited by members of the HABS staff.